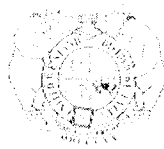


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August 6, 2007

Dear MRDD Stakeholders:

What a busy spring and beginning of summer 2007 has been!!

- The Missouri General Assembly wrapped up the 2007 session,
- Governor Blunt signed the appropriation bills into law,
- The committee of stakeholders (recommendation #24 of the Lt. Governor's Mental Health Task Force) submitted their final report and recommendations,
- People First of Missouri held their bi-annual conference in St. Louis,
- The Division has begun the training for the implementation of the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS),
- The Division and the SB40s have updated the Service Coordinator's manual, and
- The Division has two new members of the Division's leadership team.

These items represent just a few of the many activities going on within the Division and with our partners-you.

First, Governor Blunt and the Missouri General Assembly provided additional resources to meet the critical needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families who are on the waiting list, as well as have autism. The Division received \$15.8 million to address the needs of all individuals who have a utilization review score of either 11 or 12 for both the in-home and residential waiting lists. These individuals are those who have the most urgent needs and are often in crisis. Additionally, the Division received \$3.9 million to address the needs of individuals with autism and their families, and \$3.7 million to reduce the service coordinator to consumer ratios through collaborating with SB40s and Affiliated Community Service Providers (ASCP). The Division's contracted community providers received a 2% cost of living adjustment.

Second, I want to thank the committee of stakeholders of recommendation #24 of the Lt. Governor's Mental Health Task Force for their excellent work through their public meetings, deliberations, and hard work to develop a final report and set of recommendations. The committee made eight recommendations and the final report can be found on the Division's website at <http://www.dmh.mo.gov/mrdd/Stakeholders/Recommendation24FinalReport.pdf>.

What a fantastic conference People First of Missouri held on April 27-29 in St. Louis!! There were over 350 self-advocates in attendance from around the state learning from other self-advocates and national leaders from the Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) board

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of directors, The sessions covered topics ranging from self-directed supports and services to hiring your own direct support staff, prevention of abuse and neglect, housing, employment and leadership.

The Division is in process of implementation of the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS), which measures the pattern and intensity of supports an individual, 16 years of age or over, with developmental disabilities needs to be successful across common activities (home and community living, employment, health and safety, and social activities). The SIS is not a diagnostic test; it is a planning tool. That is, the SIS is intended to be used to inform planning teams regarding individual support needs. Earlier this month, we had the SIS trainer from the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) provide train the trainer training to 12 Division staff throughout the state. These 12 SIS trainers will train a total of 100 interviewers statewide, who at this time will be Division employees. We anticipate that within the next year that all individuals 16 years of age or over and participating on one of the Division's three Home and Community Based Waivers (Comprehensive, Community Support, and Lopez) will have the SIS interview conducted with them and two-three people who know the individual well. Additional information about the SIS will be posted on the Division's website within the next couple of weeks.

Earlier this year, a workgroup comprised of SB40 staff and Regional Office staff worked to update the Service Coordinator manual for use of all current and future service coordinators. The final product has been sent to Trilogy to be uploaded on the Missouri Network of Care website to make it more accessible for everyone. I want to thank all the members of the workgroup for the dedication and exemplary work on this important project.

The Division is pleased to have two new members to its leadership team. Kit Glover began on July 2 as the Director of Federal Programs Unit. She previously worked with the Department of Social Services-Family Support Division as a program development specialist. Vickie Niederhofer began on July 16 as the Deputy Director of Habilitation Services. She comes to us via Illinois and has a vast experience in the mental health field serving as Division Administrator, Residential Service Director, Assistant and Center Director of the Murray Center. Please join us in welcoming Kit and Vickie to the Division.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to Missourians with developmental disabilities and their families and I look forward to working with you as we create supports and services that reflect cutting edge, best practices.

Sincerely,



Bernie Simons, Division Director
Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities

BS:ns

Enclosure

c: MRDD Exec Team
Regional Center Directors